

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reexamination of the captioned application is respectfully requested.

A. SUMMARY OF THIS AMENDMENT

By the current amendment, Applicants basically:

1. Amend independent claim 1, 19, 35, 36, 47, 51, 53 and 61.
2. Respectfully traverse all prior art rejections.
3. Petition for a One Month Extension of Time.

B. PATENTABILITY OF THE CLAIMS

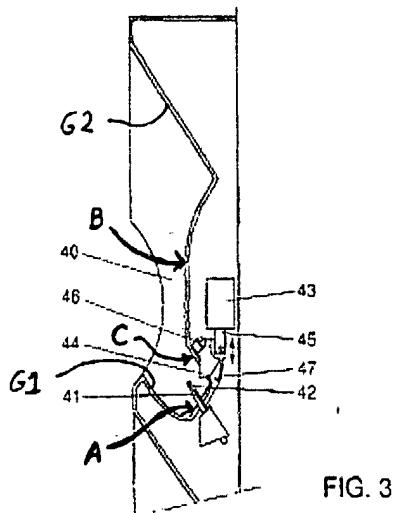
All independent claims have been amended to recite a terminal support element which comprises opposed guiding walls inclined by a predetermined angle with respect to a vertical axis. As amended all independent claims require that the opposed guiding walls defined opposed end walls of the terminal support element in a direction perpendicular to a terminal insertion direction. Further, all independent claims include a support step for a lower end of the terminal which extends from a first guiding wall of said opposed guiding walls. All independent claims require that the support step be defined on a first surface, with no surface oriented differently to the first surface being provided to connect the support step to the other guiding wall of said opposed guiding walls.

Applicants' original disclosure including but not limited to Fig. 2 clearly supports the amendatory limitations. The paragraph beginning at page 14, line 18, and continuing to page 14, line 28, has been amended commensurate with Fig. 2.

Fig. 2 of U.S. Patent 5,468,942 to Oosterveen is reproduced below and annotated to show surface A, surface B, and surface C. In the annotated Oosterveen Fig. 3, if:

- G1 and G2 are taken to be the opposed guiding walls defining opposed end walls of the terminal support element in a direction perpendicular to a terminal insertion direction; and

- surface A is taken to be the first surface extending from the first guiding wall G1 and on which the support step for a lower end of the terminal is defined; then clearly Oosterveen fails to teach Applicants' claim limitation that no surface oriented differently to the first surface is provided to connect the support step to the other guiding wall G2. Keeping in mind that Applicants' claims require the guiding walls to be end walls (which Oosterveen walls C and B are not), then Oosterveen does have walls B and C which are both oriented differently to the first surface A.



As shown in the above sketch and in contrast to all of applicants' independent claims, Oosterveen discloses a curved surface (B) and a further inclined surface (C) which are oriented differently to the first surface (A) and which connect the support step

to the other guiding wall (G2). In view of the above, all independent claims are novel over Oosterveen.

Nor would it be predictable for the person skilled in the art to modify the compartment of Oosterveen in a way such as to arrive at the subject matter of Applicants' independent claims. In fact, in order to arrive to claim 1, for example, curved surface (B) and inclined surface (C) of Oosterveen would have been removed. However, the person skilled in the art would have realized that, by doing this modification, he would have lost the important role played by the curved surface (B) and inclined surface (C). Indeed, surfaces (B) and (C) protect mechanism formed by members 43, 45 and 47 from dust or undesired objects which are accidentally inserted into the compartment.

Alternatively, in order to arrive to claim 1 the person skilled in the art would have had to substitute curved surface (B) and inclined surface (C) with a single surface oriented as the first surface (A). However, the skilled person would not have done this modification because he would have lost another important role played by the curved surface (B) and inclined surface (C). Indeed, surface (B) is curved and surface (C) is inclined toward the terminal insertion aperture so as to create an area for housing mechanism 43, 45 and 47. It is quite clear that substituting curved surface (B) and inclined surface (C) with a single surface oriented as the first surface (A) would have caused a lack of (e.g., insufficient) space for the mechanism 43, 45, and 47.

In view of the above, all independent claims are both novel and patentable over Oosterveen taken alone or also when taken in combination with the other applied art.

C. REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW

On or about the date of filing hereof the undersigned is/will contact the Examiner to arrange for an interview. The Examiner is requested to await the interview prior to

acting further on the captioned application, and to contact the undersigned if for any reason an interview has not yet been scheduled.

D. MISCELLANEOUS

In view of the foregoing and other considerations, all claims are deemed in condition for allowance. A formal indication of allowability is earnestly solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge the undersigned's deposit account #14-1140 in whatever amount is necessary for entry of these papers and the continued pendency of the captioned application.

Should the Examiner feel that an interview with the undersigned would facilitate allowance of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,
NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By: /H. Warren Burnam, Jr./
H. Warren Burnam, Jr.
Reg. No. 29,366

HWB:lsh
901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1808
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100